

G20 1st EDM Trip Report

Yogyakarta, Indonesia

March 21 – 23, 2022

Purpose of Mission: To represent the U.S. Government at the G20 1st Environment Deputy Ministers' Meeting (EDM), including the G20 Water Dialogue, and to meet with key bilateral partners to advance environmental cooperation on various issues such as climate change, equity, and pollution.

EPA Delegation: Jane Nishida (OITA) and Maxwell Torney (OITA)

I. G20 Water Dialogue

Building upon the previous two G20 Water Dialogues (Italy and Saudi Arabia), Indonesia focused their Water Dialogue on “Ecosystem-based Approaches and Nature-based Solutions for Water Management, Circular Cities and Net Water Positive for Sustainable Water Development”.

First Session - Global Overview & Lessons Learned

Moderated by FAO, this session presented a global overview of issues and problems in water management concerning ecosystem-based approaches and nature-based solutions, circular cities, and net water positive for sustainable water development. This session also reviewed and addressed lessons learned from existing initiatives from G20 members. Formal presentations were delivered by UNEP, UNESCO, and Saudi Arabia.

Second Session - Sharing Session: National Experiences and Best Practices in Implementing Policy and Increasing Awareness

Moderated by Dr. Efransyah, Senior Advisor to the Minister of Environment and Forestry, this session allowed G20 members to present best practices, policies, and initiatives regarding ecosystem-based approaches and nature-based solutions, circular cities, and net water positive for sustainable water development across all sectors. Formal presentations were delivered by China, EU, Indonesia, and Japan. US EDM Head of Delegation (HOD) Jane Nishida delivered the U.S. intervention.

Third Session - Identifying the Gaps & Formulating Solutions

Moderated by Dr. Efransyah, Senior Advisor to the Minister of Environment and Forestry, this session encouraged participants to discuss and formulate existing challenges and determine solutions for water management, circular cities and net water positive for sustainable water development. Indonesia provided three guiding questions on: obstacles encountered in implementing policies; implementation strategies; and funding schemes that could be developed for supporting program implementation. G20 countries provided interventions and gave several inputs and suggestions to each other. US EDM HOD Jane Nishida delivered the U.S. intervention.

II. G20 1st Environment Deputy Ministers' Meeting

First Session – Land Degradation

Presentations were provided by UNCCD, IFAD, and University of Palangka Raya (UPR). Interventions were made by G20 Deputy Ministers or Heads of Delegations. For the U.S. intervention, EDM HOD Jane Nishida make opening remarks which included a condemnation of Russian aggression in Ukraine and Eleanore Fox (State Department) delivered remarks on land degradation.

Second Session – Halting Biodiversity Loss

Presentations were provided by UNCBD and the Indonesian Ministry of Environment and Forestry. Interventions were made by G20 Deputy Ministers or Heads of Delegations. For the U.S. intervention, Eleanore Fox (State Department) delivered remarks on biodiversity.

Third Session – Marine Litter

Presentations were provided by UNEP and the Indonesian Chamber of Commerce and Industry. Interventions were made by G20 Deputy Ministers or Heads of Delegations. For the U.S. intervention, EDM HOD Jane Nishida delivered remarks on marine litter.

Fourth Session – Integrated and Sustainable Water Management

Presentations were provided by FAO and UNDP. Interventions were made by G20 Deputy Ministers or Heads of Delegations. For the U.S. intervention, EDM HOD Jane Nishida delivered remarks on integrated and sustainable water management.

Fifth Session – Sustainable Finance

Presentations were provided by the World Bank and UNEP, and the Indonesian Ministry of Finance. Interventions were made by G20 Deputy Ministers or Heads of Delegations. For the U.S. intervention, EDM HOD Jane Nishida delivered remarks on sustainable finance.

Sixth Session – Ocean Conservation

Presentations were provided by IPB and the Indonesian Ministry of Ocean and Fisheries Affairs. Interventions were made by G20 Deputy Ministers or Heads of Delegations. For the U.S. intervention, John Griffith (State Department) delivered remarks on ocean conservation.

Joint Session EDM-CSWG Concluding Plenary

This concluding session featured feedback by the Co-Chairs of the EDM and Climate Sustainability Working Group (CSWG) parallel sessions, and discussion on developing potential building blocks for the joint Environment and Climate Communique. Interventions were made by G20 Deputy Ministers or Heads of Delegations. CSWG HOD Trigg Talley (State Department) delivered the U.S. intervention.

II. Bilateral Meetings

UK

Russia: Discussed how G20 countries could address Russia's invasion of Ukraine in their opening statements and how countries will act when Russia intervenes (note: Russia ended up not intervening at any point during the EDM meetings).

G20 Priority Areas for UK: Nature-based Solutions (NbS), Oceans, and finance for nature.

G20 Priorities for the US: Sustainable water management, including water reuse and sustainable lake management, oceans and NbS.

EJ: UK does not use the term "underserved" when describing communities, but supports EJ.

Bilateral Cooperation: Agree to identify actions or outcomes from the current areas of bilateral cooperation, and to report on what has been accomplished at the next Ministerial-level bilateral meeting at the G7 Environment Ministerial in May in Berlin.

European Commission

Batteries: Battery legislation proposal is being considered in the EU Parliament focusing on battery recycling and spent lead batteries. The issue of batteries has both trade and circular economy aspects. Agree that environment and trade teams should discuss this issue.

Waste: EU interested in improving its capacity to manage waste and prevent it from being exported to Africa and Asian countries. Economic incentives to keep waste are key. Agree that environment and trade teams should discuss.

PFAS: EU interested in learning more about the status of ongoing U.S. studies and research on PFAS. EU believes PFAS would be taken up by European Court of Auditors (ECA) and SAICM.

Lead: U.S. suggested G7 Strategy on lead and EU supports the idea of holding a G7 workshop on lead.

Air Quality: EU is realigning its air quality standards at the national and sub-national levels and interested in US experience. U.S. offered to get our air experts together.

EJ: Agree this is important issue. US offered to do EJ briefing as it did for the UK.

Circular economy: EU is focused on recyclability and recycled content in consumer products, particularly circular fashion. EU hopes to be able to have textile and product design workshops this year.

Bilateral Cooperation: Agree to develop an action plan/work plan ("Plan of Activities") that would identify deliverables to be discussed at the next high level bilateral meeting at the G7 or G20 Ministerial.

Japan

Minister-level Meeting: Japan's Minister is still interested in meeting with Administrator Regan and will attend the G7 Ministerial. Administrator Regan is also interested in visiting Japan on the margins of G20. Japan will schedule a preparatory virtual meeting prior to Administrator Regan's visit to Japan to discuss logistics and topics of discussion.

G7: Japan thinks the environment skeleton communique looks good but will need streamlining. US explained it is concerned about the chemical "crisis" language and that it would like to see a narrower focus, perhaps on lead. Agree that sound management of chemicals is important. Japan expressed concern with the move to regionalize oceans and would like to see the G7 return to broader Osaka Blue Ocean Vision framework.

G20: Agreed that the Water Dialogue should continue and remain under EDM. Japan noted that any discussion of nuclear wastewater (Italy G20 2021 discussions) does not belong in G20.

Indonesia

G20: Indonesia's focus is on land degradation/rehabilitation, especially mangroves and peatlands, sustainable consumption and production, biodiversity and water management. Zero draft of the Environment and Climate Joint Communique will be distributed for discussion at the 2nd EDM. Indonesia is planning three workshops: Peatlands, SCP/CE, and TBD.

Ukraine: Indonesia ok with G20 countries making statements about Ukraine. They will not hold a HOD family photo at this 1st EDM (note: they did organize a de facto HOD photo at the welcome dinner for HODs in attendance).

Bilateral Cooperation: Indonesia interested in air quality monitoring and integration with disaster management (forest fires as an example). U.S. mentioned EPA's Smoke Sense tool and offered to send information on it. Indonesia is also interested in contaminated site remediation/clean-up, especially from mining activity (related to Indonesia moving their capital to Kalimantan). In terms of wetlands and peatlands rehabilitation and mangroves, EPA can work with State Department to provide information.

France

OECD: Three topics were identified for discussion for bilateral meeting in Paris next week: citizens' engagement, G7/G20 (new topics of chemicals and water), and France's EU Presidency (EU batteries legislation). U.S. mentioned that Administrator Regan will also meet with university students.

UNEA: France notes that Europe will have its own coalition regarding the plastics resolution, but it would be good to have a transatlantic coalition.

Germany

Bilateral Cooperation: Germany's government has undergone recent restructuring and therefore areas of cooperation are in flux. For example, the just transition head has moved to the economic division. Other issues of bilateral interest include sustainable consumption and production, protection of oceans, water issues and biodiversity finance. Germany will check with its experts in these fields and identify opportunities for bilateral cooperation.

G7: Details on the Ocean Deal still have to be worked out, but it will contain "a higher level of ambition on all ocean issues." It will be an Annex to the Environment Communique and will be distributed prior to the next G7 meeting in April. U.S. said it is not ready to call chemicals a "crisis" and prefers pollution focus. Germany also views supply chains and critical minerals as important topics to be addressed. Germany has a statement/placeholder about Ukraine in the chapeau of the Communique and notes it will be important to look at how resource efficiency can help address problems rising from Ukraine crisis: energy dependency and food supply.